



**Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Investigation
at Manor Farm, Alderton
Northamptonshire
June 2016**

Report No. 16/113

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Illustrator: Olly Dindol



Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Investigation at Manor Farm, Alderton Northamptonshire January 2016

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-256008	
Project title	Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample investigation on gas pipe trench at Manor Farm, Alderton, Northamptonshire		
Short description	An archaeological Strip, Map and Sample investigation was carried out by MOLA Northampton, on land at Manor Farm, Alderton. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.		
Project type	Strip, map and sample		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Farmland		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	none		
Significant finds	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	Manor Farm, Alderton		
Easting Northing	473276 247131		
Area (sq m/ha)			
Height aOD	c85m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	MOLA Northampton		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Ian Fisher, Susan Porter (MOLA Northampton)		
Project Manager	Mo Muldowney (MOLA Northampton)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting, on behalf of D Taylor & Son		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	21/01/2016		
End date	28/01/2016		
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Physical	ENN 108104		
Paper		Watching brief forms, permatrace plans	
Digital		Photos, Client report PDF	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Unpublished client report			
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Archaeological Strip, Map, and Sample Investigation on Gas pipe trench at Manor Farm, Alderton Northamptonshire January 2016

Abstract

An archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Investigation was carried out by MOLA Northampton, on a gas pipe trench from Manor Farm, Alderton to the junction of Northampton Road and Pury Road. No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

CgMs Consulting, on behalf of D Taylor & Son, commissioned MOLA to carry out archaeological observation (strip, map and sample), investigation and recording during the groundwork for the installing of a gas pipe from Manor Farm, Alderton, to the junction of Northampton Road and Pury Road (Figs 1 and 2).

MOLA is a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) registered organisation. This report has been prepared in accordance with the current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance: for archaeological watching briefs* (CIfA 2014a) and the Historic England (HE) procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (HE 2015). The work complied with a written Scheme of Investigation by MOLA (2015).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, geology and topography

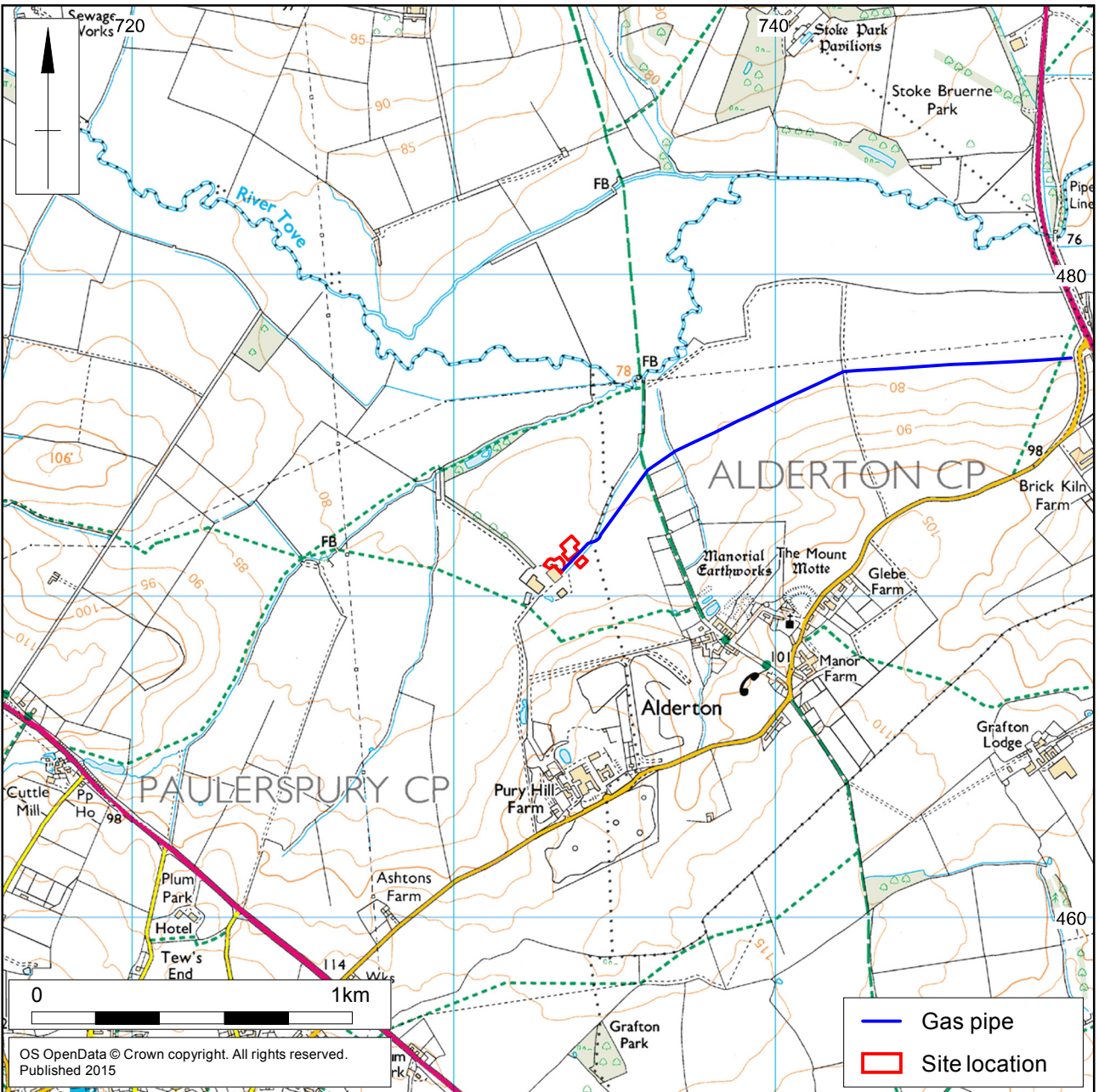
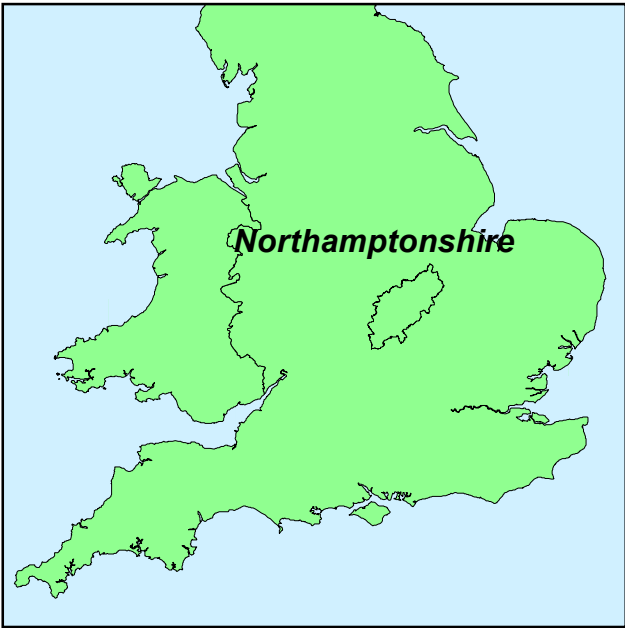
Alderton is a village in Northamptonshire, around 14.5km to the south of Northampton. It lies on the southern ridge of the valley of the River Tove, which flows east between the village and Stoke Bruerne to the north. The village is surrounded by arable farmland. The proposed development is to take place about 400m to the west of the village, on land at Manor Farm. The development area is bounded to the south by the existing farm buildings of Manor Farm, including a grain store, and to the south-east by a farm track leading around the fields to Pury Road. To the south-east, the site is bordered by a narrow belt of trees and another track. The bounds of the site to the north-west, north, and north-east are not clearly defined.

The area of the gas pipe trench lies on a relatively level area situated at c85m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The underlying geology is mapped as Whitby Mudstone Formation (BGS 2015).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The following historical and archaeological background is summarised from the Planning Statement (GP Planning 2015) and the Northamptonshire County Council Historic Environment Record.

There are no known designated heritage assets from within the area of development. However, the area around the site contains a number of recorded find spots. To the



Scale 1:20,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:7500

Location of gas pipe Fig 2

north-west of the development area, a silver coin of Iron Age date has been recorded. Roman finds of an early brooch and a later coin have been made to the west of the farm.

The medieval settlement of Alderton, with a castle mount and motte (both Scheduled Monuments), a large area of formal manor gardens and settlement earthworks, lies around 500m to the east of the site. Extant areas of ridge and furrow earthworks are also to be found on the outskirts of the village on all sides. The closest surviving ridge and furrow lies 200m to the north-east of the site.

Post-medieval items, comprising shot and a coin weight, have been found in the vicinity of the farm buildings. The village of Alderton has a number of heritage assets including the Scheduled Monuments mentioned above, a Conservation Area, and nine Listed Buildings; the closest of which are between 420m and 490m from the site.

Historic maps indicate that the area lies within agricultural fields, the boundaries of which remained essentially unchanged from 1884 until the expansion of the Pury Hill business park after 1984, which changed the location of the Manor Farm buildings and access road to their current positions.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 The main objectives of the works were to:

- mitigate the impact of the development through preservation by record;
- establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions as an intrinsic part of the investigation.

Specific research objectives were to be drawn from local and regional research frameworks as relevant depending upon results of the work (Cooper 2006, *et al* 2012).

3.2 Methodology

All works were conducted in accordance with the procedural documents Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (HE 2015), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014b). Where appropriate the research frameworks were borne in mind (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al* 2012).

The Strip, Map and Sample exercise comprised the continuous observation of removal of overburden in the development area, followed by the investigation and recording of any archaeological features that were revealed. Topsoil, subsoil and any other overburden was mechanically stripped within the areas to be excavated. This work was carried out under the constant supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. Mechanical excavation did stop at the archaeological horizon or the undisturbed geological horizon, whichever was encountered first. The machine was

fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The spoil generated was stockpiled on the side of the trench according to type. A metal detector survey was carried out during the removal of the overburden and repeated once stripping was complete.

A base plan using Leica Viva Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment using SMARTNET real-time corrections, operating to a 3D tolerance of $\pm 0.05\text{m}$ was produced. The base plan was produced at an appropriate scale (Fig 2).

The groundwork areas were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features, where present.

Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. The photographic record comprised 35mm black and white film and digital images.

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The excavated trench for the gas pipe was 0.50m wide by 1800m long and was excavated in a north-east direction from Manor Farm to the Northampton Road. It was between 1.10m to 2m deep on to dark grey brown silt clay natural which was overlaid by mid-yellow brown silt clay subsoil, 0.30m thick. The topsoil was dark brown grey clay 0.20m thick. No archaeological features or finds were observed.



Gas pipeline, south end; looking south-west

Fig 3



General stratification; looking south-east

Fig 4



General view; central section, looking east

Fig 5

5 DISCUSSION

No evidence for any archaeological features or finds was found in the gas pipe trench. The trench lies over 500m from the medieval settlement of Alderton, and even though a number of recorded finds have been found in the area, it would appear from the excavation evidence that the gas pipe trench is outside of any settlement area and presumably in an area of cultivation.

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